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ABSTRACT

This document is part of the New Expeditions series, published by the American Association of Community Colleges. Addressed specifically in this paper is the need for collaboration within and between community colleges if they are to fulfill their role as democratic agencies concerned with access and equity issues. The paper notes that community colleges are "peoples colleges," in that they provide access for low-income, first-generation and other nontraditional students, providing all who enter an opportunity to realize higher degree and career aspirations. The paper describes community colleges as both internally and externally collaborative. Internal collaboration refers to the relationships among faculty, students, and administrators that foster validating classrooms. External collaboration refers to viable relationships with the K-12 school system, the local business and industrial community, four-year institutions, and other community-based organizations. Several models of multicultural education are provided within this paper, offering the reader a comparison between a monocultural and multicultural environment. Model programs offered at community colleges around the country are also provided. The paper provides seven recommendations, each designed around internal or external collaboration, with the goal of creating a relevant and enriching environment for all students, ultimately launching students to higher levels of success. (Contains 35 references.) (AF)

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NEW EXPEDITIONS
Charting the Second Century of Community Colleges
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ACCESS

Issues Paper No. 3

Fulfilling the Promise of Access and Opportunity

COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY COLLEGES FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

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California State University

ABSTRACT

This paper outlines a vision of collaborative community colleges for the 21st century. The future of community colleges, as democratic agencies concerned with access and retention of diverse students, is contingent upon the extent to which colleges can forge relationships within and outside the colleges. These relationships, or collaborations, address the organizational culture; foster validating classrooms; preserve access and opportunity; serve a multitude of clients through technology and distance learning; and prepare students for the workforce, for further education, and for lives of commitment and social service.

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INTRODUCTION

Because community colleges are based on the ideal of democracy, these institutions are often viewed as vehicles of access and opportunity. Perhaps the most important function in fulfilling their role as democratic "people's colleges" is that of providing access to ethnic and racial minorities, first-generation students, low-income students, students with low college participation rates, and students who view community colleges as their last chance to realize their hopes and dreams. The community college open-door policy provides these groups with the opportunity to pursue postsecondary education, to initiate transfer coursework leading to a baccalaureate degree, and to enroll in occupational programs that equip them with high-level skills needed to enter a fast-growing technological workforce.

In 1996, two-year public community colleges enrolled about 5 million students. Of those students, 29 percent were minority. Eleven percent were black, 11 percent Hispanic, 6 percent Asian, and 1 percent Native American. In terms of the share of undergraduate stu-

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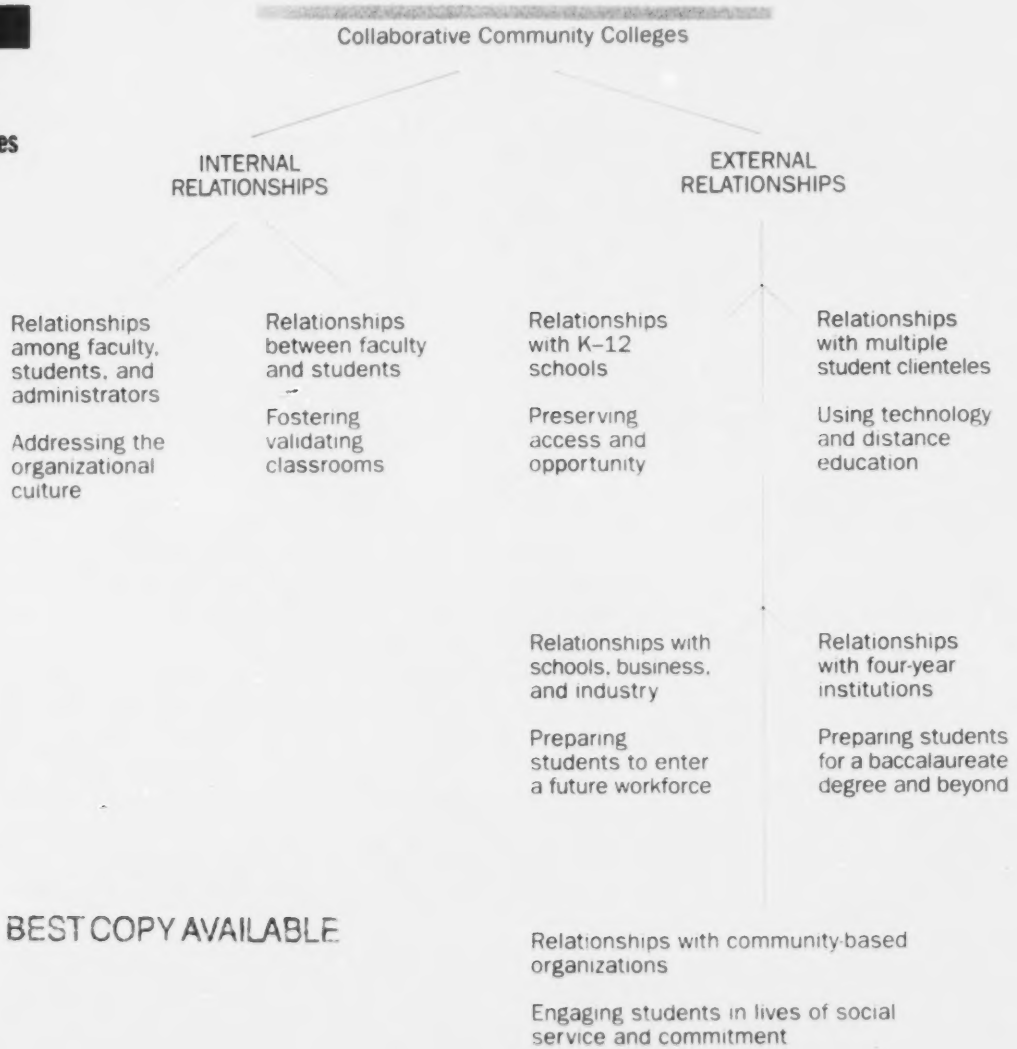
dent enrollments, the public communit college population includes 58 percent of Hispanic undergraduates, 53 percent of all Native American undergraduates, 45 percent of Asian undergraduates, 44 percent of Black undergraduates, and 41 percent of white undergraduates (*Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac* 1998). Any vision for the future of community colleges must take into account the large segment of diverse students who turn to these colleges as their only option for a new and better future.

Collaborative Community Colleges

Access and opportunity have distinguished the community college from other sectors of higher education for more than 40 years. In order for community colleges to achieve a higher level of organizational effectiveness,

FIGURE 1

Collaborative Community Colleges


Collaborative Community Colleges
INTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS
EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS
Relationships among faculty, students, and administrators
Addressing the organizational culture
Relationships between faculty and students
Fostering validating classrooms
Relationships with K–12 schools
Preserving access and opportunity
Relationships with multiple student clienteles
Using technology and distance education
Relationships with schools, business, and industry
Preparing students to enter a future workforce
Relationships with four-year institutions
Preparing students for a baccalaureate degree and beyond
Relationships with community-based organizations
Engaging students in lives of social service and commitment

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as well as to preserve access and opportunity, they must focus on their nature as collaborative community colleges. In other words, the colleges must find ways to enter into relationships with entities concerned with the common work of educating diverse students and strengthening their communities.

In this fashion, collaborative community colleges become relationship centered (figure 1). Internal collaboration involves connections among faculty, staff, administrators, and students. External collaboration involves relationships with feeder schools, transfer institutions, community-based organizations, philanthropic organizations, business and industry, elected officials, health organizations, and the media, as well as local, state, and national organizations that share a common purpose.

A vision for positioning two-year institutions as collaborative community colleges begins with a simple yet powerful objective: to provide all students with the opportunity to avail themselves of high-quality postsecondary education that will enable them to attain their educational goals and become responsible citizens. Reaching this goal requires attention to internal relationships (organizational culture) and to external relationships with key constituencies that seek similar goals.

Internal Collaboration

Figure 1 outlines two kinds of internal collaborations that characterize collaborative community colleges. One focuses on relationships among faculty, staff, and administrators in an effort to promote a healthy and productive organizational culture. The second involves the relationship between faculty and students to foster validating, democratic classrooms.

Addressing the Organizational Culture

Rob Lehman (1998, 9), president of the Fetzer Institute, writes

> There comes a moment in the life of an organization, as there does in each of our own lives, when we begin to shift our primary awareness away from what makes us distinctive

FIGURE 2

The Multicultural and Monocultural Community College Organizational Culture

	Multicultural	Monocultural
I. Ethos	Reflects multiple identities and diverse ways of knowing and operating	Operates as if a single culture prevails reflecting mainstream values
II. Staff	Full diversity is represented—gender, race/ethnicity, religious background, disability, and sexual orientation	Staff is predominately white and male
	Staff (regardless of background) has cultural competence	Staff has limited understanding of differences among groups or how to build trusting relationships
	Staff is guided by conceptions of social justice, democracy, fairness, and human dignity	Staff is not open to collaboration, participation, openness, and inclusiveness
III. Power Structures	Organization adopts humanistic approach to governance	Culturally different views are devalued and excluded
	Power structures are democratic and reconstructed based on a critical analysis of institutional policies and practices	Power structure is autocratic and exclusive
	Organization works to build and promote community	Professionals work in isolation from one another; secrecy and competitiveness prevail
	Everyone in the organization is given the opportunity to participate	Power is vested only in a few individuals

> and unique to the question of what is the larger purpose we share with others. And so, as we begin to understand ourselves as a part of each other, as we begin to understand ourselves as part of something larger, our true identity comes into clear relief.

How does the American community college find the larger purpose it shares with other entities? Lehman suggests that collaborative relationships that are open to self-examination, growth, trust, and mutual action require attention to the inner and outer life of the institution. In other words, institutions must attend to their inner issues in order to discover and engage in their common work with others. One way to examine the inner culture of the community college is to ascertain the extent to which the institution is functioning as a monocultural or multicultural institution.

Figure 2 presents the organizational elements that distinguish a multicultural and monocultural community college (Rendón 1999). Monoculturalism refers to an adherence to homogeneity accompanied by the view that cultural diversity is a threat to dominant conceptions of education and social life. A monocultural college operates as if one single culture prevails, and administrators and faculty are predominantly white and male. The monocultural college fosters assimilation and sameness, its power structures are not humanistic, professionals work in isolation from each other, and low expectations are set for students.

RECOMMENDATION 1

Community college leaders, faculty, and staff should engage in collaborative analysis and planning to design collaborative community colleges based on the principles of multiculturalism and democracy.

By contrast, multiculturalism refers to the incorporation of a wide range of perspectives that are representative of culturally diverse peoples. Bensimon and Tierney (1993) assert that "multiculturalism is a complex set of relationships framed around issues of race, gender, class, sexual orientation, and power. Multicultural organizations struggle to understand commonalities and differences among underrepresented groups and develop an appreciation of how an understanding of these characteristics might create alliances for change. . . . Multicultural excellence [is] based on democratic acceptance of both the commonalities and differences of all groups on campus" (68).

A multicultural community college reflects diverse ways of knowing and operating. In a multicultural unit, administrators and faculty are representative of different cultures, and power structures are reconstructed through a critical review of institutional policies and practices. A multicultural college works to promote community and prepares students not only for jobs but also for multiple roles in their communities and in society as a whole. In a multicultural college, power structures are humanistic and democratic, and programming is student-centered and validating in nature. A multicultural community college embraces multiple forms of cultural knowledge, organizational complexity, and critical thinking. It is guided by a philosophy of full access (Rendón 1999; Shaw, Rhoades, and Valadez 1999). What is being suggested here is that access is related to creating an organizational culture responsive to a diversity of students, faculty, administrators, and staff. Community colleges that adhere to a monocultural orientation are operating in direct opposition to the rich multiculturalism that superimposes them.

Diversity and multiculturalism are not new to American community colleges. These are institutions that take pride working in partnership with their dynamic, multicultural

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communities. The colleges also take pride in the diversity of students, faculty, and staff; the multiplicity of programmatic offerings; and the diverse definitions of success. These are the very institutions where one would expect to find a wide range of examples of the philosophy of multiculturalism. One can find examples of multiculturalism in just about every community college; however, the same is true of monoculturalism. In a monocultural community college, the capacity for collective solution-finding disappears and can lead to system failure.

Organizational experts Margaret Wheatley and Myron Kellner-Rogers, authors of *A Simpler Way* (1996), suggest that organizations and communities that learn to work together, trust one another, and become more expansive and inclusive can deal with change effectively and respond to problems quickly and efficiently.

Fostering Validating Classrooms

A second form of internal collaboration occurs between faculty and students in the classroom. In the report *Creating More Learning-Centered Community Colleges*, O'Banion (1997, 33) states that two-year colleges must make concerted efforts to place learning first. This includes "1) overhauling the traditional architecture of education and 2) placing learning as the primary mission and outcome of education."

One of the key reasons that transforming the traditional view of teaching and learning must be addressed is that community college retention rates are low. Retention rates for full-time and part-time community college students fall below comparable rates in four-year institutions. In fall 1990 the persistence rate for full-time, first-time students in two-year colleges was 56 percent. The comparable rate in four-year institutions was 73.2 percent. First-time, part-time students persisted at a rate of only 36 percent in two-year colleges, whereas the persistence rate for part-timers in four-year institutions was 53.2 percent (Tinto 1993). Retention is a particular issue for at-risk students who come to college expecting to fail or to be "just a number." For these students, access is more than finding an open door. Access is learning and staying in college until academic goals are met.

In a new vision of collaborative community colleges, the emphasis is on a relationship-centered classroom environment that connects students with faculty in new and exciting ways. A study involving focus

RECOMMENDATION 2

Community colleges should design validating teaching and learning environments that are relationship-centered, connecting faculty and students.

MODEL PROGRAM

Coordinated Studies: Seattle Central Community College

Coordinated Studies Programs (CSPs) at Seattle Central Community College allow students to register for a common set of thematically linked courses such as "Our Ways of Knowing: The African American Experience and Social Change." The CSPs link courses and faculty from different disciplines and fields. Students enroll for 18 credits within sociology, political science, art, and English. They attend class Monday through Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. On one day, students are divided into smaller seminars of 20 to 25 students with each of the four participating faculty members, forming learning communities that cross disciplinary boundaries. Course activities include small-group and whole-class discussions, seminars, group projects, field trips, lectures, guest speakers, and films. Assignments include individual and group projects. Emphasis is given to cross-disciplinary topics, team teaching, and collaborative learning as well as student involvement in the creation of class knowledge (Tinto and Russo 1994).

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FIGURE 3

Fostering a Validating Classroom

Invalidating Model	Validating Model
Students treated as empty receptacles and/or as incapable of learning.	Students bring rich reservoir of experiences and are motivated to believe they are capable of learning.
Students are expected to disconnect with the past.	The past is a source of strength and knowledge.
Faculty assault students with information and/or withhold information.	Faculty share knowledge with students and support students in learning.
Faculty instill doubt and fear in students.	Faculty structure learning so students are able to see themselves as powerful learners.
Faculty are experts, the sole source of truth and authority.	Faculty are partners in learning with students.
Students are oppressed, silenced, and cast in subordinate roles.	Students are allowed to have a public voice and share their ideas openly.
Faculty focus solely on abstract thinking.	Faculty recognize the importance of experience as a base of knowledge and that out-of-class learning is equally powerful.
Students are passive.	Faculty employ active learning techniques such as collaborative learning, demonstrations, simulations, and field trips.
Evaluation instills fear and is objective and impersonal.	Learning standards are designed in collaboration with students, and students are allowed to re-do assignments until they master them. Faculty praise and encourage motivation.
Faculty and students remain separated.	Faculty meet with students in and out of class, serve as mentors for students, and encourage and support them.
The classroom is fiercely competitive.	Students work together as teams and are encouraged to share information.
Fear of failure permeates the classroom environment.	A climate of success is fostered by faculty and students.
Teaching is linear, flowing only from teacher to student.	Teachers may be learners; learners may be teachers.
Students validated only at the end of the term.	Students validated early and validation continues throughout college years.
The core curriculum is male-centered and/or Euro-centered.	The core curriculum is inclusive of the contributions of diverse groups.
Students encouraged to give automated and rote responses.	Learning allows for reflection, multiple perspectives, and imperfection.

Source: Rendón 1994

groups of community college students (Rendón 1994) asked these students what had made them persist during their first year, a time when most attrition occurs. Interestingly, students did not refer to incidents where they took the initiative to become involved. In fact, many of these students, who were nontraditional, found it difficult to get involved on their own. Jalomo (1995) notes that students who have been "invalidated" in the past make poor grades in high school, have been out of school for long periods of time, are married with family obligations, and/or are first-generation, find it difficult to get involved in campus life. They are afraid to ask questions for fear of being perceived as stupid or lazy.

Rendón (1994) notes that what had transformed nontraditional students into powerful learners and persisters were incidents in which other people, in or out of class, had "validated" them. Validation occurs when faculty and staff let students know they are capable learners, are valued by the institution, and play an important part in their own learning. The community college then can deliver its promise of access and opportunity.

The remaking of the classroom is essential in the creation of a multicultural, democratic community college. Figure 3 shows the differences between a validating classroom and its antithesis. In a validating classroom, the role of the institution in promoting learning and retention shifts from passive to active. Validation is also present in learning communities where students learn in collaboration with peers and faculty.

External Collaboration

Figure 2 outlined internal and external relationships that characterize collaborative community colleges. These include:

- Relationships with K–12 schools to address issues of access and educational opportunity
- Relationships with multiple student clienteles to address issues of diverse learning needs through the use of technology and distance education
- Relationships with schools and business and industry to prepare students to enter a futuristic workforce
- Relationships with four-year colleges and universities to prepare students for baccalaureate degrees and beyond
- Relationships with community-based organizations to engage students in social service and commitment

All of these relationships allow community colleges to work with entities that share a common purpose. These relationships are concerned with access, retention, and learning, fulfilling the key objective of assisting students to attain their educational goals and become responsible citizens.

Preserving Access and Opportunity

Access does not begin in the community college; it begins in grade school. Access is shaped early in a student's life as a number of barriers act to preclude academic preparation, high school graduation, college entry, and college graduation. Therefore, access should be considered longitudinal in nature. One way community colleges can significantly improve college access and retention rates is to address precollege barriers to access. This requires entering into a relationship with K–12 feeder schools. As long as students come to community colleges academically unprepared, low retention rates will persist and access opportunities will be seriously diminished.

Preschool Barriers to Access

Students that grow up in poverty too often find that poverty becomes their destiny. Orfield and Ashkinaze (1991) explain that there is a sharp contrast between ghetto and barrio life and middle- and upper-class life that most white people fail to understand.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Relationship-centered models that engage two-year colleges with feeder K–12 schools should be created in order to design institutional outreach strategies (for example, early intervention, summer bridge programs, and mentoring programs) that target students in the early grades. These models should focus on eradicating access barriers, instilling the idea that college is a viable option, and ensuring that certain requirements are fulfilled in order to attend college.

MODEL PROGRAMS

Project GRAD (Graduation Really Achieves Dreams), Houston, Texas

Project GRAD works with two vertical feeder systems at the K–12 levels: One is predominantly for Hispanic students, the other predominantly for African American students. The feeder system ensures consistency throughout the K–12 system in terms of materials, classroom management, curriculum in reading and math, and collaborative learning. Project GRAD incorporates Success for All, an elementary school reading, writing, and language skills program; Move it Math, a program in elementary and middle schools; Consistency Management and Cooperative Discipline, a self-responsibility class management and parental involvement program at all levels; and Communities in Schools, a social services and case management program at all levels. Tenneco, a primary sponsor, provides a $1,000-per-year scholarship for four years in any college or university to graduating seniors who go on to college. Test scores have increased significantly in math and reading. Moreover, prior to Project GRAD only 20 percent of the high school graduating class at Jefferson Davis High School went to college. In 1997, more than 70 percent of the graduating class qualified for scholarships (Opuni 1996).

Puente Project, University of California

The Puente Project was initiated in 1981 at Chabot Community College in Hayward, California, in an effort to assist students to complete community college work and transfer to the University of California. In 1993, Puente began a high school version of the program that now operates in 18 California high schools. The goals are high school retention and college preparation. The program provides intensive writing instruction, a focus on Latino literature, academic counseling, community mentors, and parent workshops. A case study cites 81 to 90 percent of the 1994–95 entering cohort was still in school and in the program. This is significantly higher than rates for those who did not participate in the program (Gandara 1996).

Children born into poverty usually suffer from deficiencies in nutrition and health and are often labeled "at-risk" or "remedial" (Nora, Rendón, and Cuadraz 1999; President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans 1996; Rendón and Hope 1996). Their communities are removed from academics and often, these students do not encounter anyone in their daily lives who has attended college. Consequently, they lack information about what it takes to go to college. These students and their parents do not know they need to take specific courses to qualify for college admission, are unaware of the necessary level of performance required in these courses, and are not familiar with admissions policies, application procedures, or availability of financial aid (Geiser 1996).

Bourdieu (1977) notes that children from dominant group families possess a specialized kind of "cultural capital," that is, they possess a working knowledge of the values and traditions of educational institutions acquired through early socialization in middle- and upper-class families. Conversely, children from low-income families lack the benefits of privilege and status. Their families do not go on expensive vacations, do not spend time abroad, and cannot afford to attend expensive cultural events. Their cultural capital (language, cultural traditions) is incongruent with the symbolic and social expectations of the existing educational system that favors children from middle- and upper-class families.

Educators tend to stereotype students who lack the "right" cultural capital as underachievers who are not interested in social and career mobility. Yet, a study that examined the aspirations of 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th grade urban students in 16 cities found that the vast majority of these students wanted to graduate from high school, attend college, and graduate from college (Rendón and Nora 1996).

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K–12 Barriers to Access

Students from low-income backgrounds tend to fall behind in reading, writing, science, and math early in their schooling. They also exhibit high rates of absenteeism. Most school suspensions occur among African American, Native American, and Hispanic students. Students in poor communities usually attend segregated, poorly funded schools that provide the least of what the American educational system has to offer. Schools in poor districts operate with outmoded curricula, lack computers, and hire the least trained teachers. Often, poor and minority students are tracked into nonacademic programs of study that do not prepare them for, or lead them to, college. Failure to take college-prep courses has devastating consequences. Not only is access to college jeopardized, it disqualifies students from entry-level jobs in high-tech industries (Oakes 1985; Rendón and Hope 1996). It is clear that there are significant barriers to access that continue to restrict equal opportunity, especially for low-income students.

Promoting Technology and Distance Education

As the 1990s quickly draw to a close, new ways of expanding access and flexible delivery of instructional systems are needed to serve diverse student clienteles such as working adults, nontraditional students seeking new formats to learning, and students living in rural areas. Community colleges are well-positioned to become Information Age institutions. The colleges have been at the forefront of distance education, by applying various distance delivery approaches such as video technologies, satellite uplinks and downlinks, compressed video systems, interactive video courses, telecourses, audio technologies, and computer- and telecommunications-based systems, among others (Lever-Duffy, Lemke, and Johnson 1996).

RECOMMENDATION 4

Relationship-centered models that involve community colleges learning more about the educational needs of their diverse clientele should be developed and sustained in order to design instructional programs for students when and where they need them.

MODEL PROGRAMS

Exemplary models using distance education are described in the League for Innovation publication *Learning without Limits: Model Distance Education Programs in Community Colleges* (Lever-Duffy, Lemke, and Johnson 1996).

Preparing Students to Enter the Workforce

According to Norton Grubb (1992), community colleges have become "inescapably vocational (1)." While critics charge that community colleges have diverted students away from bachelor's degrees and into vocational programs with little or no payoffs, Grubb asserts that there are real benefits when students are allowed entry into positions where they can accumulate consistent work experience and on-the-job training; in other words, careers rather than jobs. Graduates of community colleges with a two-year associate degree earn almost $12,000 more per year than high school dropouts (Partnership for Family Involvement in Education 1997). However, there are few benefits to students who complete courses without earning credentials.

Some of the "hot" programs provided by community colleges with excellent job prospects include accounting, agri-business, allied health, architectural technology, auto-

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RECOMMENDATION 5

Community colleges should work in concert with local schools and business and industry to design models (school-to-work, youth apprenticeship, tech prep, career academies, and cooperative education) that prepare students to enter the workforce.

MODEL PROGRAMS

The Maryland-United Parcel Service (UPS) School-to-Work Consortium

Area high school students from the Anne Arundel County Public Schools, Baltimore County Public Schools, Howard County Public Schools, Montgomery County Public Schools, and Prince George's County Public Schools participate in this consortium. Students earn eight dollars per hour working part time at the UPS Burtonsville facility. Students are eligible to enroll for up to nine hours of business-related courses at no cost. Faculty from Anne Arundel Community College, Catonsville Community College, Howard Community College, Montgomery College, and Prince George's Community College teach the courses on site. UPS provides the classroom facilities and textbooks. The community colleges cover the faculty salaries and rotate the teaching responsibilities. A reading specialist attends all the business courses and offers the participants tutoring (Marrow and McLaughlin 1995).

Florida's Seminole Consortium: Partnership with Seminole County Schools and Seminole Community College

In the early 1990s the Siemens Stromberg-Carleson (SSC) Corporation was having difficulty finding qualified telecommunications technicians. The company contacted Seminole Community College (SCC) to help meet the shortage. The Seminole County Public Schools (SCPS) were asked to increase the pool of skilled applicants. Representatives from SCC and SCPS visited SSC's German site to observe how the apprenticeship model functioned. The program was designed so that high school students took applied courses in mathematics, science, and electronics. During their senior year, students receive both high school and college credit for attending the SSC training center at SCC. The graduates are then placed in one of SSC's 14 facilities nationwide (Cooper and Souders 1997).

motive, computer applications, culinary arts, emergency medical services, fashion merchandising, and fire science, among others (Phillippe 1998).

Sanchez and Laanan (1998) indicate that "The foundation of vocational-technical or occupational programs is to teach students the essential skills, knowledge, and abilities that link to the world of work" (5). As our society shifts from manufacturing to increasingly technical industries, the market will seek people with computer and high-tech skills. Community colleges are perfectly poised to meet this increased skills training demand.

The following are some barriers related to preparing students for a futuristic workforce:

- low rates of high school graduation
- low levels of preparation in math, science, and computers
- lack of meaningful employment opportunities for high school students
- lack of availability of high-tech training programs
- creaming of participants in training programs
- lack of demand-driven training programs
- few coordinated efforts between private sector and community colleges

It is clear that in order to prepare students for employment and, more important, to equip students with skills to participate in a global economy, two-year colleges must play a pivotal role as collaborators with key entities that share this mutual purpose. In short, community colleges need to forge partnerships with entities such as schools and employers from business and industry. Through effective school-to-work systems, community colleges serve as a primary link between secondary and postsecondary education, provide transition programs such as tech prep and cooperative and career educa-

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tion, and collaborate with employers, the community, government, and labor organizations (Laanan 1995).

Preparing Students for Baccalaureate Degrees and Beyond

Community colleges are access points to attaining bachelor's degrees and advanced degrees through the transfer function. This is a critical role because it allows students who wish to earn four-year degrees (and ultimately to pursue graduate and professional education) to employ the community college as a conduit toward the baccalaureate. However, this function can be fulfilled only if students transfer from two-year to four-year colleges and universities.

Despite concerted efforts to improve transfer rates, the national transfer rate is only 22 percent, and the rate ranges from a low of 3 percent to a high of 42 percent (Cohen 1993). National data indicate that in 1989–90, nearly one-fourth (23 percent) of bachelor's degree seekers began their studies at two-year institutions (U.S. Dept. of Education 1997). Low transfer rates spell bad news for students using two-year colleges to put them on a course that leads to the baccalaureate. In particular, ethnic or racial minorities, who are disproportionately concentrated in community colleges, exhibit lower baccalaureate attainment rates than do white students, effectively limiting their opportunities to enter white-collar jobs and high-level leadership positions that require advanced degrees.

According to the *Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac 1998*, in 1994–95, 539,691 bachelor's degrees were awarded. Of these, white students earned the highest share of degrees, (78 percent, or 419,323). African American students earned 9 percent, or 47,142, Hispanic students earned 7 percent, or 36,013, Asian students earned 4 percent, or 20,717, and Native American students 1 percent, or 5,492. Increasing the

RECOMMENDATION 6

Community colleges should enter into collaborative partnerships with four-year institutions to facilitate the transfer process, establish articulation agreements, initiate Transfer Year Experience Programs at the four-year institution, and ensure that students are able to attain bachelor's degrees and be poised to enroll in graduate and professional schools.

MODEL PROGRAMS

Achieving a College Education (ACE) Program, Maricopa Community Colleges, Arizona

ACE is a collaborative 2+2+2 program originally established in 1987. The purpose is to increase the number of minority, economically disadvantaged, and at-risk students who attain baccalaureate degrees after successfully completing high school and associate degrees. ACE has successfully collaborated with high schools in two districts and Arizona State University (ASU) to enhance retention and graduation. ASU, in conjunction with South Mountain Community College, offers a transfer bridge program for students during their third or fourth summer in the program. The program provides enrollment in a university-level course and a combination university orientation-transfer information component, a one-week residence hall experience, and orientation for ACE parents.

Summer Scholars Transfer Institute (SSTI), Santa Ana College, California

The Summer Scholars Transfer Institute (SSTI) is a joint project among Santa Ana College, Los Angeles Community College District, and the University of California at Irvine (UCI). The program serves 150 students each summer. SSTI is an 11-day residential program where students earn three hours of college credit in one of five courses. Students and faculty meet one month prior to the SSTI. Students must complete extensive reading assignments and the classes stress collaborative learning. Students participate in evening study groups. The UCI also arranges a transfer day where students meet individually with admissions staff to review their transcripts and discuss admissions requirements. About 95 percent of all students successfully complete the course. Santa Ana College has doubled the number of underrepresented students transferring to the University of California. Statewide, Santa Ana College has improved its ranking from 44th to 9th place in number of Chicano/Latino Students transferring to the UC System (McGrath and Van Buskirk 1998).

RECOMMENDATION 7

Community colleges should develop relationship-centered service learning programs that engage students and faculty working to revitalize their communities while engaging in a critical analysis of how this work relates to personal growth and development.

MODEL PROGRAMS

Service Learning at Middlesex Community College (MCC), Bedford, Massachusetts

This program was built around the belief that the most effective and sustainable service learning program should model the core values of reciprocity and equality. Recognizing that the program would grow only as a result of collective and collaborative efforts, the college sought an open and free exchange among faculty, administrators, staff, students, and community agencies. MCC started in 1992 with its first service learning course in hunger, homelessness, and social policy. The program has grown due to collaboration with faculty in order to build interest in service learning, collaboration within the institution to secure a larger share of institutional resources and offer new opportunities for faculty and students, and collaboration outside the institution to link with state and national networks (Pickeral and Peters 1996).

Integrating Service Learning into a Multicultural Writing Curriculum, Kapi'olani Community College (KCC), Honolulu, Hawaii

KCC emphasizes multiculturalism in its service and learning in order to reflect its diverse community and student body. Faculty from diverse disciplines created a set of 15 integrated courses with service learning components. Students established tutorial and mentoring teams, and produced a community-based newsletter for residents in public housing and low-income areas (AACC Web site 1998).

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share of degrees earned by ethnic and racial minorities requires that more students transfer from two-year to four-year institutions.

Preparing Students for Lives of Commitment and Social Service

Many community colleges include service learning in their missions. Service learning is usually thought of as a course that involves an experiential component, usually volunteer work. Regardless of race or sex, a higher percentage of students in four-year institutions than in community colleges are engaged in volunteer work (Nettles and Perna 1997).

While many service learning programs have surged in community colleges, in the future the outcomes of service learning should go beyond community renewal. What is equally important is to renew the humanistic, spiritual dimensions of students themselves. In other words, service learning at its highest level involves a connection between the inner world of spirit and the outer world of service. Rob Lehman (1998, 3) notes that "The percentage of the public who see spiritual growth as a critical value in their lives has grown from 53 percent to 78 percent in just the last three years. And only 6 percent of this group consider themselves New Age. This is a mainstream movement."

As catalysts for community renewal, two-year colleges are well poised to capture this movement in a curriculum that involves faculty working with students in an effort to make service learning more authentic, holistic, rewarding, and meaningful. Service learning programs should engage students and faculty in becoming more aware of both how they are unique and how shared values, meaning, and purpose can be incorporated into making a difference for their communities. Developing a life-long devotion to leading lives of commitment and social service requires that service learning programs inspire the authentic enthusiasm of both students and faculty.

Service learning is true collaboration in action. Programs that connect service learning activities (the outer world of civic duty) and individual spiritual self-understanding and development (the inner world of spirit) represent one of the most significant contributions community colleges can make within the next 10 years.

Conclusion

Preserving access and opportunity requires community colleges to view themselves not only as distinct and unique, but also as institutions that can collaborate with others in order to fulfill the larger purpose of realizing the educational goals of diverse students. In short, the promise of access and opportunity can be fulfilled only if community colleges strengthen their already established collaborative nature and become relationship-centered institutions. The future of community colleges rests on their ability to enhance their internal and external relationships in open, democratic, and inclusive ways. In this collaborative fashion, the most powerful aspects of community colleges in the 21st century will be educating students, assisting students to attain their educational goals, and encouraging students to be responsible, active citizens.

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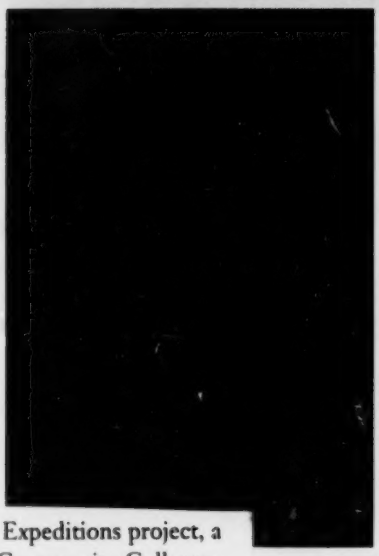

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